

# Canal Value For Transportation Proved By 1830; Not So Railroads

**D. & H. Canal Co. Faced Hard Times; 'What Will Be The End Of It?' Wrote Hone In Diary, 'God Only Knows And General Jackson Don't Care'**

The News presents today the fifth of a series of articles on the history of the Delaware and Hudson Canal, as written by E. D. LeRoy, member of the board of trustees of the Wayne County Historical society, and appearing in the Monthly Bulletin of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Internal Affairs.

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The value of canals as means of transportation had by now been proved beyond any doubt and there were yet many people who could not be convinced that railroads would ever be practicable for distances of more than a few miles. In any event the backers of the aforementioned railroads could not have been encouraged by a lengthy article written by W. R. Hopkins, a prominent engineer, for the Albany "Evening Journal" October 15, 1830. In it he said,

"There are places enough to make railroads where water can not be had for canals and to such places they should be confined. I am opposed to seeing the streams of our State run idle and the spirit of an enlightened canal policy swept away by railroad fanaticisms."

That the economy of transportation by canal be questioned when the element of time is not of great importance, will be evident from the following table of tolls published for 1831:—

(The amounts shown as per ton per mile)

Salt	2½ cents
Cement	3½ cents.
Ground Tanners bark	2 cents.
Underground Tanners bark	1½ cents
Liquor, Sugar, Molasses	1 cent.
General Merchandise	3 cents.
Iron, up the Canal	3 cents.
Iron, down the Canal	2 cents.
Timber in boats per 100 cu feet	per mile but not to exceed total amount shown for any distance on the canal —

Hemlock 1 cent (\$.75).

Oak 2 cents (1.50).

Pine 1½ cents (\$1.00).

Maple-Poplar 3 cents (\$3.00).

Timber in rafts properly secured  
No maximum.

Hemlock 2 cents.

Oak, Maple, Poplar, etc 4 cents.

Pine 3 cents.

Cord wood in boats, from 1 to 10 miles, per cord per mile, 4 cents.

Above 18 miles, 60 cents per cord, plus 1 cent per cord for every five additional miles.

Mileage on boats down the canal 2 cents; up the canal, 4 cents.

The franchise granted the canal company would not permit charges in excess of 4 cents per ton per mile except on coal.

At no time during the first twenty years of operation did the tolls from the various commodities exceed \$50,000 although the tonnage of the company's coal shows, with a few exceptions, a regular but gradual increase.

The Canal had opened up a new, cheap means of transportation for the residents of Wayne and Pike Counties and heavy items, on which the freight charges had, in many cases, exceeded the value of the article, were now brought within the means of the average farmer. Obviously the traffic on the Canal was not limited to coal, although coal always remained the one important item. Durham boats were sometimes seen upon the D.

& H. for on December 18, 1830 the Maunch Chunk Currier reported that two, the "Pilot" and the "Spy" had arrived at that place from—

"Honesdale at the head of the Delaware & Hudson Canal—to Carpenter's Point, at which place they took on 15 tons of plaster of Paris. Three miles below the Water Gap they took on a cargo of boards for Bethlehem on the Lehigh, 12 miles above Easton, then in ballast to this place in tenders. A. Bently, master of the boats, says he has been in canalling business for several years and intends to build two deck boats for the coal trade next season."

A stranger sight must have been witnessed when, according to the Milford Eagle for August 6th, 1831.

"... two Tuscarora Indians with their squaws and papooses arrived at this place, Friday last, by water, in bark canoes in which they travelled from Buffalo by way of the Erie Canal to the North River & from that river into the Delaware & Hudson Canal and so into the Delaware River, a short distance above Carpenter's Point. They are shortly to leave for Pottsville in this state."

On April 13, 1831 John Wurts was elected president to succeed John Bolton, who had held that office since Philip Hone had resigned in 1826. Wurts seems to have been a capable man and what is more his qualifications as a lawyer